

**Project Title: Apanolio Canyon Fish Passage Enhancement Project**

**Geographic area of interest:**

San Francisco Bay Region (2)

**Name of responsible entity:** City of San Mateo Wastewater Treatment Plant

**Estimated cost for project completion:** \$9,000.00

**Contact information:**

City of San Mateo Wastewater Treatment Plant

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San Mateo County Resource Conservation

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**Brief description of the project:**

**Apanolio Canyon Fish Passage Enhancement Project Description**

The City of San Mateo is not independently required to participate in this project and does not have any mitigation projects that are associated with this project. The City of San Mateo Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) discharges to the lower San Francisco Bay. This project is being managed by the San Mateo County Resource Conservation District.

The Pilarcitos Creek Watershed, located in coastal San Mateo County, is a significant resource for diverse interests, including water supply, waste management, agriculture, fisheries, and wildlife habitat. Pilarcitos Creek originates in steep coastal mountains and flows through lower gradient flood plains and the City of Half Moon Bay before reaching its estuary and the Pacific Ocean. There are five major tributaries within this 29 square mile drainage, including Apanolio Creek. This project will help to protect those interests.

The Pilarcitos Creek Restoration Plan, prepared for the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) in 1996, identifies Apanolio Creek as one of the most important steelhead trout streams in the Pilarcitos watershed, due to its good riparian condition, year-round springs, and relative availability of rearing habitat. Migratory passage by steelhead to the upper stream reaches is, however, restricted by the presence of three in-stream barriers, which eliminate or severely restrict steelhead access in all but the highest stream flows. The San Mateo County Resource

Conservation District (SMCRCD) was awarded a grant from the State Water Resources Control Board (Agreement # 02-085-252-1) to remove one of the barriers and improve riparian habitat. The barrier is a perched culvert associated with a rural road that effectively blocks fish passage during low flows due to its height above the stream bed. The steelhead are essentially unable to "jump" or "flip" up and over these barriers as they migrate upstream in search of spawning grounds. The Watershed Plan identifies modification or removal of these three barriers to allow steelhead passage as a very high priority for the Pilarcitos Watershed.

The goal of this project is to restore steelhead trout passage in Apanolio Creek, by removing an existing migration barrier, restoring a more natural hydrologic regime, protecting existing species and habitat, improving in-stream and riparian habitat in reaches directly affected by the project, while maintaining agricultural water supplies and access to private property. The perched culvert will be removed, replaced with a three-sided free-span bridge, and the stream re-graded with a boulder step pool sequence. The SMCRCD and landowner selected these recommended alternatives after field surveys as well as discussions and site visits with representatives of the National Marine Fisheries Service, DFG, RWQCB, and the Pilarcitos Creek Advisory Committee.

Since the inception of the project, construction and permitting costs have increased substantially. It is therefore necessary to seek additional funds for completion this summer. Kellyx Nelson, Executive Director of the SMCRCD, was advised by Carmen Fewless of the RWQCB to approach the City of San Mateo for their consideration of this project as a SEP.

Kellyx Nelson, Executive Director of the SMCRCD, contacted Mark Von Aspern, Plant Manager for the City of San Mateo Wastewater Treatment Plant, regarding the proposal for utilizing the Apanolio Canyon Fish Passage Enhancement Project as an appropriate SEP proposal in regard to MMP Complaint No. R2-2007-0012. Mark Von Aspern, Plant Manager for the City of San Mateo Wastewater Treatment Plant, has approved the proposed SEP. The SMCRCD will continue to be responsible for managing the Apanolio Canyon Fish Passage Enhancement Project and will be responsible for meeting all compliance schedules set forth by the RWQCB. The SMCRCD will provide the City of San Mateo WWTP with regular itemized reports to track SEP expenditures.

SWRCB or RWQCB functions or staff will not benefit from the funding of this SEP. All SEP funds will be used for the completion of the Apanolio Canyon Fish Passage Enhancement Project.

**Water Body, beneficial use and/or pollutant addressed by this project**

Water body: The Pilarcitos Creek Watershed, Apanolio Creek, Pilarcitos Creek, Pacific Ocean

Beneficial uses: (iv) habitat restoration and enhancement, (vi) stream or other waterbody restoration